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MONTEREY NEWS

September, 1978

O U R T O W N

Tax Increase There is an announcement from the Assessors' Office to the effect that the tax evaluation on each house in Monterey will be increased by 10%. According to the equalized valuation calculated by the State Tax Assessors, property values have gone up by approximately that amount. The State required a full and fair cash value assessment on each property in a town. Monterey's Assessors feel that the most reasonable means to comply with this requirement is to raise the valuation on houses.

Road News The Selectmen have decided not to purchase a new road sander this year. The cost of a new machine exceeds the amount appropriated by Town Meeting in the spring. According to Selectman Dick Tryon we can get another year our of the old sander. This year's appropriation will be kept in a special account, and more money will be requested next year to bring the total up to the required amount.

Beartown Road Improvements will begin on Beartown Road September 15. General reconstruction including new drainage and new culverts will begin at the new dam and will proceed "up the hill as far as money will take us."

Help! The Selectmen once again request advice from townspeople on plantings to be made along the newly surfaced flats on the west side of town. The landscape-minded among you are hereby exhorted to offer opinions. (Call Dick Tryon at 528-0728, Tom Bradley at 528-0782, or Stefan Grotz at 528-4519.)

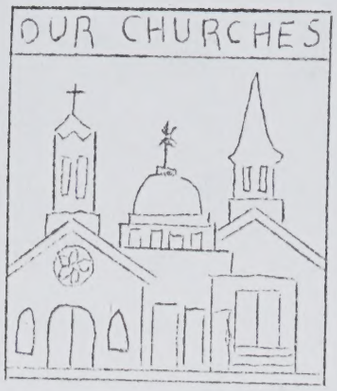
Town Office Curtains Anyone who has glanced up at the windows of the Town Offices will agree that the curtains hanging there are a disgrace. The Selectmen would appreciate ideas for improvements and perhaps even a donation. So far the only stipulation has come by way of a wistful statement by Dick Tryon to the effect that "it would be nice if they all matched."

Steak Roast a Success The Monterey Fire Department wishes to offer its thanks for help with the Steak Roast. 366 stead dinners were served and asmmany hamburgers and hot dogs. It was a fine social occasion topped off by the unexpected bonus of two dance bands in the evening. The picnic netted $1500 which will go toward the purchase of a Home Alert System costing $4500 in total. The mechanics of a Home Alert System are these: Fire calls to a 24-hour fire phone in Great Barrington. From there, at the push of a button, all Monterey firemen are alerted within 30 seconds by way of a "personal pager," a small box worn on the belt through which messages are received. Details on the location and intensity of the fire will come to each man directly from the Barrington transmitter. The Monterey Firemen have elected to forfeit the $35-$50 alloted each year to each man and to contribute this sum for thenext few years to the Home Alert System Fund.

Thanks for volunteer effort in connection with the Steak Roast go to: Umpachene Grange, Monterey Grange, New Marlborough American Legion Post, New Marlborough Fire Department, Monterey Congregational Church, Tryon Construction Company, Mill River Store, Isaac Walton League, Gould Farm, Avalon School, Great Barrington Fire Dept., Tyringham Fire Dept., Gans Furniture Co., Monterey Highway Dept., John Sellew's Band, and everybody else who took part.

Gravity Car Race Where can one sit for free in dappled shade with friends and friendly strangers and watch a non-energy-intensive display of skill and daring on a late summer afternoon? Try the annual Gravity Car Race on Wallace Hall Road. This year's race on September 3 thoroughly filled the bill. Among several refinements on past races was the firemens' concession stand halfway down the track. In addition to that, an ambulance manned by Bill Gilchrist perched ominously above one of the most treacherous corners. Happily, its only contribution came by way of a loudspeaker in the cab which boomed out announcements of finish times. There were, nevertheless, the requisite number of spine-chilling crashes into hay bales, bent frames, bent wheels and soles of shoes sanded paper thin around corners. The variety of design among the vehicles so far remains infinite. One car was made from a modified helicopter stretcher. One had a movie camera mounted on its front wheels. Roger Tryon's entry had a rectangular roll bar. Bob Stevens won the $150 prize money for the second year running. John Dinan came in second. Everybody went home happy.

Continued on back page....



CATHOLIC CHURCHES

The Women's Guild from Our Lady of the Hills would like to thank everyone that helped to make their sale on September 2 a success. $306 was realized.

Masses Schedule:
Our Lady of the Valley, Sheffield: Sat.,- 5:30 PM, Sun. - 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM. Immaculate Conception, Mill River: Sun. - 10:00 AM.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Notes — Morning worship each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. . . . . Kindergarten class, Sundays at 10:30 a.m. . . . . The funeral of John (Bud) Fijux was on August 26.

Finance Campaign — The Church's financial campaign for the year 1979 is nearing completion. The approach this year was to depend much more heavily on making the appeal through a series of three letters to members and friends of the Church. The response to the mail approach was very good, but there was a weakness in the program for visitation on those that did not come in by mail. The pledges and gifts to date is at about $16,000. This is near the amount that was pledged last year. If any person has not computed their statement of intention for 1979 the treasurer would be glad to receive it soon.

World-Wide Communion Sunday — World-Wide communion Sunday will be celebrated on October 1. This effort to give a common expression of unity to Christians around the world was begun many years ago. The ideal it envisioned is still worthy of our search. We appeal to all in our fellowship to respond to the claim upon each of us to give an expression of the unity that underlies our faith.

Laity Sunday — Laity Sunday will be celebrated in the Monterey Church on October 8th. Lay persons will be responsible for the worship and thus emphasize that the life of the Church always depends on the laos, "the people."

4-H

Berkshire 4-H fair was held at Jim Peck, Hancock, Massachusetts. On August 19, Shawn Ryder won the trophy for the most outstanding photograph exhibiter. 4-H is in desperate need of leaders; anyone interested please contact Lois Ryder.

BROWNIES

Brownies will be starting very soon. Anyone interested in helping, please contact Mrs. Bradley.

GIRL SCOUTS

Girl Scouts will be starting in the middle of September. Anyone interested in assisting, please contact Linda Whitbeck.

SCOUTS

Boy Scouts of Pack 51 will register in September. They will find out the date through their school. Maryellen Brown will be handling a pack from Monterey.

*MOST GROUPS WILL NOT START UNTIL LATE SEPTEMBER OR EARLY OCTOBER.

Pam Gauthier
Youth Editor

WHAT SHALL WE DO ABOUT GUILT?

For several months the problem of guilt has been chewing at the edge of my consciousness. What shall we do about guilt? An enormous amount of human behavior is partly motivated by guilt. It is perfectly clear that even what the good men and women do is tarnished because they act more from guilt than the pure love of what they are doing. I may help someone in need, but if I do it to relieve my guilt rather than from a genuine caring for the person the "generous" act is already less effective.

I have been talking to a number of persons lately about the way they see the role of guilt in human behavior. I find many people thinking, "Well, that's just the way it is, and human society being organized as it is there's nothing we can do about it." The few people I have talked to in the last several days estimated that guilt-motivated behavior accounts for 50 to 90% of all human action. When I spoke of my concern to find a way to reduce behavior based upon guilt some have said, "It is the glue that holds us together. Take away guilt and society would disintegrate." How do you feel about that figure? Would you make it more or less?

Given the figure of 50 to 90%, and having no idea whether it is really so, still does not suggest that an ominously large amount of human behavior may be tarnished because it has an element of force and coercion in it.

I should like to begin an exploration with you over the next few months through this page on the way guilt affects our life and character. Let me state a beginning position. I believe it is a tragedy that so much adult behavior is diminished because we are acting not from freedom but from some hidden spring of compulsion. If one of the purposes of life is that we should become free persons, then this purpose is being tragically thwarted. I cannot but find myself wishing we had more effective means of aiding the movement out of the dilemma of childhood guilt into a more complete adult freedom. I should like to turn this search into a two-way conversation and invite letters and responses of others who join with me in this concern.

One of my assumptions, you may have already noted, is that I believe that to be human is to begin our pilgrimage with guilt. We humans are social creatures. My humanness lies not only in my genetic and biological inheritance, but it depends heavily on what I receive socially and culturally. As soon as you and I come to consciousness we are literally surrounded with standards, expectations, hopes, dreams, rules and a multitude of socially transmitted values. As soon as you and I begin to perceive that there is a gulf between ourselves and all of these socially given standards and values the seed-bed for guilt has been planted. Home, church, synagogue, school, neighborhoods, peer groups and all sorts of "human arrangements" see to it that there are all kinds of things to feel guilty about. I do not imagine for one moment that we can by-pass this process. If we could devise some way to neutralize all these value-setting agencies we would already have found a way of escaping our true humanity. I do not want to escape my humanity. Do you? Therefore I take it as an absolute given that we cannot begin the pilgrimage into being a human person except by passing through a stage in which we are given all sorts of materials from which to build feelings of guilt. If someone can think of a way to side-step this very guilt-inducing stage of our development I should like to hear of it.

The issue I am raising is that since guilt continued too heavily into and through adult life tends to diminish "the good we would do" we should be finding ways to move more rapidly into freeing ourselves from guilt as the basis of our behavior. I am convinced beyond a shadow of doubt that those things I do willingly and freely of my own desire are the things I do best. Those things I do because "duty demands it" or because I would feel guilty if I didn't drop short of being my best. Do you find this so in your life? The truth of this proposition shows itself most clearly in those adults who come into their mid-years finding that almost everything they do is from a sense of duty or guilt. They have to force themselves through their days and life becomes an intolerable burden. Pushed to this degree there is no question but that guilt literally crushes the joy of living from them.

Since guilt lies in the experience of all of us, and since each must of necessity style our lives a bit differently from all other persons, there is undoubtedly a rich resource of thinking and feeling on the subject. I do sincerely invite all who are willing to be a part of this search for a further movement in human consciousness to send me your observations and ideas. If you send a letter and are willing for it to be printed in the Monterey News, please indicate your willingness. Otherwise I shall simply take such communications as your sharing of thoughts and feelings with me as we try to open this important human issue further.

Virgil V. Brallier, Minister
Monterey United Church of Christ

NEWMAN B. ABERCROMBIE

Newman Abercrombie has lived in Monterey nearly 60 years. For 54 of these years he was Town Librarian. For 36 years he was a Town Assessor. He sang in the choir, was church treasurer and was treasurer of the Water Company. Looking back over his life, he says he has some regrets. He wishes he had done more and better.

Newman came to Monterey after having given up on teaching languages at a high school in New York state. He took what jobs were available, these being Librarian and, later on, Assessor. When he started work in 1924 he had no training in what is now called Library Science, and he applied himself to his job with what one of his fellow Assessors, Paul Thorn, calls "seat of the pants judgment." In addition to the many responsibilities of a small town librarian, Newman was paid $2 a month to be janitor of the library. Although he recounts that, when he got the library job, he insisted that the Librarian's salary be raised to fifty cents an hour, Newman has a reputation for having resisted salary raises over the years. The Board of Trustees painfully persuaded him to accept small pay raises now and again, but his $2 a month janitor's salary never changed. There were times, says long-time Trustee Anne Makuc, when Newman refused to accept a certain day's pay because nobody had come in for a book all day.

Newman describes himself as having been conservative in choosing books. He went by what he felt people wanted, and he is said to have been upset if a book he had purchased proved unpopular. Within his own slightly elusive shelving system, he was intuitive and direct. He knew where every book was, even if it was in a pile in the basement. He never adapted himself to the newer, more formalized and mechanized systems of information retrieval, either in the library or in the Assessors' Office. As Paul Thorn points out, Town properties weren't systematically mapped until 1966, and for years Newman carried all that kind of information in his head. He puts it this way: "We had a loose way of doing things. I don't understand how they do it now."

Newman's tenure as Assessor is remembered by Sheldon Fenn (who spent 39 years in the office) as a particularly fortuitous time. Shel, Newman and George Helmrich served together for 18 years in an unchallenged and remarkably effective Board. Shel said, "In a position like Assessor you could easily get people to hate you. But the people were satisfied." He describes Newman as "precise, outspoken and dependable," a man who seemed to have "nothing to fear."

Friends and acquaintances to a man describe Newman as sharp-witted and intelligent. He gives a great deal of attention to current events. He reads widely, not books, surprisingly, but magazines and newspapers. He is known to make lightly censorious but invariably accurate predictions about the future. Cynthia Weber says he has the "youngest viewpoint"of anybody in town. Wallace Tryon said, "I tell Newman he is a Man without a Country. He's got no property, pays no taxes and never had a girlfriend." Another friend said, "Newman? Well, he's just an ordinary person, and yet he's not." Newman describes himself as "standoffish." He never learned to dance. He never took up athletics. He says he couldn't afford to get married. It is possible that it is the singular combination of acute application of mind with a kind of perfect unworldliness which has produced such a notable man. Anne Makuc says, "His failings are also somehow his best points, if you know what I mean." He is described as both meticulous and disorganized, both obsessive and very instinctive. For example, he often sent the police out after overdue books, but he never levied a fine on a child.

It is perhaps at the intersection of virtue and vice that he is at his best. Marjorie McLaughlin has fond memories of her times with Newman. As Secretary of the Library Trustees she could not help but succumb to the temptation to add levity to the minutes of an organization "so small, so utterly hick" that it could not possibly sustain seriousness. As the minutes were read and the Trustees sat solemnly listening, Marjorie, glancing at Newman, would always receive a wink and a smile "from a man you would not think capable of a wink."

Newman's pessimistic evaluation of his own achievements is characteristic. "I never had any energy," he says. "I was a poor one to throw out books. I could have been neater." Townspeople feel otherwise. As Shel Fenn said, "We know the kind of man that Newman is and why we respect him. He played a part in the history of Monterey, and no one will forget it." A fair summation was made by Amanda Perin in a book of good wishes to Newman upon his retirement from the library. She wrote in letters half an inch high: "I think you are a very good librarian and I love you."

Ellen Pearson

September is usually a time for the arrival of new staff members. Several are due this month and two have already arrived. Robert Rausch, whose early home was in Cumberland, Rhode Island, in the northeastern part of the state, went to school there and then on to the University of Rhode Island in Kingston. He spent four years getting his degree, majoring in biology. He followed this with a year at the University of Maine, in Orono, where he received his teacher's certificate and put it to good use in several New England schools. This summer, while working in Claverack, New York, he heard of Gould Farm and decided to apply for a job here. Bob has worked a lot with boys and has strong outdoor interests. He hopes to develop nature trails, something the Farm has not had in recent years.

Edwin Sollenberger lives in Bloomsburg, in south central Pennsylvania. This spring he received his B.A. in Rehabilitation Education from Penn State. At a Friends General Conference he met Bob Carter, of the Farm staff, and from him learned about Gould Farm. In recent summers Ed has worked as a farmhand. A year ago he held an interneship at the Community Mental Health Center. From his short acquaintance with the Farm, he thinks he will like working here.

Rose McKee

MONTEREY GRANGE #291

Monterey Grange met August 16 for visiting Past Masters' Night with Jack Scoville of Sandisfield acting as Master. 50 members and friends representing 10 Granges enjoyed a variety program.

The recent pancake breakfasts were a success. On August 19 there was a food sale.

Lynne Whitney and Andrea Pizzichemi are recipients of scholarships from the Massachusetts State Grange.

On August 8 the Sisters decorated the church social room with floral arrangements in connection with the concert.

Mary Wallace

Lecturer

"Our Town" continued from front page...

Improvements in Greene Park A new sandbox has been installed in Greene Park by the Children's Health Program. Drawing upon a grant of $10,000 provided for the purpose of upgrading playgrounds in the Southern Berkshires, CHP not only constructed the sandbox but also leveled the town skating rink, using clay and topsoil, so that it will hold water and will freeze evenly this winter. The skating rink project was carried out with the cooperation of the Grange.

PTA The School Committee of the Berkshire Regional School District will meet Thursday, September 21, at 7:30 PM at New Marlborough School in Mill River. Everyone is invited to attend. This is in line with a new policy of the Committee which is to meet at various schools around the Region so that its doings will be more available to the public.

Town Gathering The Monterey Democratic Town Committee is sponsoring "Saturday Night Fever" -- an auction, from 6 - 8 PM and a square dance, 8 - 12 PM, to be held on September 30, 1978 at Tom Bradley's Barn, Blue Hill Road, Monterey. Refreshments will be available, plus a door prize -- Donation is $2.50 (children 12 & under free). Tickets are being distributed by: Margaret White, Bill Brockman, Matt Williams, Kay Mielke, and Howard Kolodner.

Monterey Historical Society Edwin Gabler, research associate at Chesterwood, will be the speaker at the 1978 fall meeting of the Monterey Historical Society. The meeting will be held on September 16th at 8 PM in the museum. Slides and photos will help us to visualize the "Gilded Age of the Berkshires." Thanks go to the volunteers who have kept the museum open each Saturday and have assisted with the processing of our acquisitions. Do come and bring a friend and neighbor.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

Since the last issue we have received contributions from: Mrs. Solomon Berson -- Mr. George Bruckbauer -- , Mr. & Mrs. Philip Lombardo -- Mrs. John MacIver -- and Mrs. Evalyn Stafford -- We are very grateful!

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

Anyone wishing to be a part of a play group of 2- to 3-year-olds, please call:

Sharon Steinberg 528-4115

STONE MOUNTAIN POTTERY AND WEAVING STUDIO/GALLERY will be open weekends until Christmas or by appointment. Art School Road.

528-4115

Carolyn Bell, fiber artist-in-residence at Yamato House, Lenox, is now at Blue Hill Farm, Blue Hill Road, Monterey. Wall hangings and sculptures available on commission.

Apprenticeship also available.

528-9200

Reliable 11- and 12-year-olds desire babysitting work in the Monterey area. Children under 6 preferred. We will babysit weekdays after 4 and any time weekends.

Call 528-2074 and ask for Karen or Linda

S T A F F

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